



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

Commissioner's Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ECONOMY ENDS YEAR WITH STRONG OVERALL GROWTH

HELENA, Mont. --- Statistical measures of the Montana economy continued to show strong growth, indicating an improving overall employment picture throughout the state. The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate fell to 3.7%, which continued an emerging trend of record lows, while seasonally-adjusted employment grew by 3,100 jobs. *

“Unemployment in Montana has been steadily declining, with individual claims averaging almost a week and half less than last year,” said Department of Labor and Industry Commissioner Keith Kelly. “People are finding work in Montana.”

Additionally, statistics showed an increase in unadjusted employment of 8,200 jobs from the previous year or an increase of 2.0%. An examination of individual industries showed employment increases for most sectors.

Education and Health Services saw the largest increase over the previous year, with 1,700 jobs and was followed closely by Leisure and Hospitality with 1,600. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities and Business Services each increased by 1,400 positions, while Construction gained 1,300 positions. Government added 600 additional jobs, while Natural Resources and Mining added 300. Manufacturing, Information, and Financial

Activities each increased 100. Other Services showed the only decline, with a reduction of 400 positions.

Unemployment rates declined relative to last year for almost all 56 counties in Montana. Sweet Grass County's rate was the lowest at 1.8%, while Big Horn County's rate was the highest at 8.0% (see attached table). The five largest counties in the state, Yellowstone, Missoula, Flathead, Cascade, and Gallatin, each had rates below 4.5%, indicating high levels of employment in the state's population centers.

Additional information related to this employment situation press release can be found by visiting the Research and Analysis website at www.ourfactsyourfuture.org

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** Seasonally-adjusted numbers remove the effects of events that follow a more or less regular month-to-month pattern each year. These adjustments make nonseasonal patterns easier to identify. The margin of error for the unemployment rate is plus or minus 0.8 percentage points at the 90 percent confidence level. All questions relating to the calculation of unemployment rates should be directed to Tyler Turner, Economist with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau.*

******* INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET *******

County unemployment rates are also available in our monthly economic bulletin, *Montana Economy at a Glance*, and on our website.

Employment information from the Bureau of Indian Affairs is available on the Department of Labor and Industry web page at:
dli.state.mt.us/resources/articles.asp

The January 2006 Labor Situation Report will be released Thursday, March 9, 2006.

December 2005 & 2004 County Unemployment Rates Not Seasonally Adjusted					
	2005 Rate	2004 Rate		2005 Rate	2004 Rate
Beaverhead	3.4	3.8	Madison	3.2	4.0
Big Horn	8.0	9.6	Meagher	4.9	5.8
Blaine	2.9	4.3	Mineral	6.8	6.9
Broadwater	3.6	3.9	Missoula	3.6	4.0
Carbon	3.6	4.5	Musselshell	4.9	6.2
Carter	3.0	2.3	Park	4.7	5.5
Cascade	3.6	4.0	Petroleum	5.4	6.5
Chouteau	2.9	3.4	Phillips	3.7	4.5
Custer	3.4	4.4	Pondera	3.7	5.0
Daniels	2.8	3.7	Powder River	3.2	3.5
Dawson	3.1	3.4	Powell	5.7	6.8
Deer Lodge	5.6	6.9	Prairie	4.7	5.0
Fallon	2.0	3.0	Ravalli	4.9	5.9
Fergus	5.7	6.4	Richland	2.5	2.8
Flathead	4.2	5.6	Roosevelt	5.5	6.5
Gallatin	2.5	3.4	Rosebud	5.4	5.1
Garfield	4.3	4.9	Sanders	6.3	6.6
Glacier	6.6	8.3	Sheridan	3.4	4.0
Golden Valley	4.3	6.3	Silver Bow	4.0	4.6
Granite	4.7	5.8	Stillwater	3.1	3.1
Hill	3.5	4.3	Sweet Grass	1.8	2.3
Jefferson	4.4	4.3	Teton	3.3	4.2
Judith Basin	4.2	5.1	Toole	2.6	3.1
Lake	5.2	6.0	Treasure	4.0	4.1
Lewis & Clark	3.4	3.9	Valley	3.8	4.2
Liberty	3.3	4.2	Wheatland	4.2	5.7
Lincoln	7.8	10.1	Wibaux	2.6	3.0
McCone	2.7	2.5	Yellowstone	3.0	3.3